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<p>(54) Title: CORROSION PREVENTING BUFFER SYSTEM FOR METAL PRODUCTS (57) Abstract A system is disclosed for inhibiting the corrosion of ferrous and other metals by passivating the metals. The system includes novel buffered compositions which may be applied to metal products for preventing or retarding corrosion and methods for applying the buffered compositions to metal products such that corrosion protection of the products is achieved through passivation. The methods include an in-situ application to existing structures with metal reinforcement as well as applications to metal products during manufacture. Generally, the compositions may be in various forms and comprise a carrier component and one or more pH buffer components. The buffer is selected to retain the proximity of the metal at a pH at which the metal is passive to corrosion. The compositions are environmentally friendly and are capable of replacing chromates which have been traditionally used with zinc and zinc alloys to inhibit corrosion of metals but which are potentially harmful to the environment.</p>		

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10 CORROSION PREVENTING BUFFERSYSTEM FOR METAL PRODUCTS.

15 The present invention in a broad aspect relates to inhibiting the corrosion of
metals. The invention more particularly concerns compositions and methods of
controlling the pH proximate a point of incipient corrosion of a metal at a pH
value where the metal is passive to corrosion. The invention more especially
concerns coating compositions comprising one or more particulate or liquid
materials, including one or more pH buffers. The compositions also preferably
20 include one or more particulate or liquid corrosion inhibitors. The compositions
also typically include a vehicle or other carrier for the particulate materials and
liquid materials, which preferably takes different forms, depending on the nature
and form of the metal being protected.

25 The corrosion of steel and other metal products continues to be a serious
technical problem which has profound effects on the economy and the standard of
living. It causes premature replacement of infrastructure, which in turn causes
loss of natural resources, and gives rise to inferior roads and buildings. It also
causes premature replacement of equipment and parts in industry and in boats and
30 other marine vehicles, automobiles, and aircraft.

 The process of corrosion requires several physical conditions. These
conditions include a metallic path, an electrolyte, anode, cathode, and a potential
difference between the anode and the cathode (tendency to corrode). A metallic

path allows the transfer of electrons between the anode and cathode sites; this path is normally the substrate metal. The electrolyte is normally an aqueous solution around the substrate metal and contains ionic species capable of transferring charge between the anode and the cathode of the substrate metal. The anode is the location where the substrate metal corrodes and mass loss occurs. At the anode, metal atoms lose electrons and convert to metal ions which are drawn into the surrounding electrolyte. At the cathode, ionic species receive electrons from the substrate metal and convert them back to molecular form. Potential difference (or tendency to corrode) between the anode and cathode can result from many different conditions which include: variations in metal or alloy compositions; difference in amount of dissolved oxygen; presence of impurities on the substrate; ionic strength and/or constituents; temperature differences; etc.

Corrosion can be prevented, halted, or reduced by interrupting the transfer of electrons, by changing the chemistry at the anode or cathode, or by isolating the substrate from the electrolyte. Methods to achieve the prevention of corrosion include the use of barrier coatings or claddings, sacrificial coatings, corrosion inhibitors, cathode protection, and surface passivation. The barrier coatings or claddings include paints, organic coatings, ceramic and inorganic coatings, plastics, noble metal platings or claddings (such as nickel) and more. Sacrificial coatings prevent corrosion by having a greater tendency to corrode than the metal they protect, thus converting the substrate metal to a more noble (non-corrosive) potential. Sacrificial coatings include zinc, aluminum, and magnesium metals and alloys applied as claddings, hot dip coatings, platings, or as fillers in primers and paints or other organic coatings. Corrosion inhibitors change the surface chemistry at the interface between the metal substrate and the electrolyte solution. This interface barrier may be formed by oxidizing the anode surface, precipitating a film or barrier layer that limits diffusion of ionic species between the bulk electrolyte and the substrate surface, or by adsorbing compounds which impart a hydrophobic film to the substrate metal surface. Cathodic protection of a substrate surface may be achieved by converting the entire surface of the substrate metal to

a cathode through the use of sacrificial anodes or impressed electrical current. Surface passivation involves importing an oxide film to the substrate metal surface, thus preventing or reducing the tendency of the substrate metal to develop anode and cathode sites. Metallic substrates develop passive surfaces in specific environments or when exposed to solutions with specific pH ranges. For example, steel and iron substrates are naturally passive when exposed to aqueous solutions that have a pH of 8.5 or above. Aluminum also has a naturally passive surface due to an oxide that forms a tightly adherent oxide film limiting further exposure of oxygen to the metal substrate. Passive films, however, can be attacked and compromised by certain ionic species. In the case of iron and iron alloy materials, the naturally passive surface can be compromised by chloride ions and hydrogen ions, among others.

The previously mentioned mechanisms of corrosion protection have various drawbacks. Barrier coatings can be expensive and offer very little protection against corrosion if they are compromised, damaged mechanically, or have insufficient coverage. Sacrificial coatings have the potential of creating embrittlement of high strength steels due to the creation of monatomic hydrogen by-products from the corrosion reaction. The coatings may also be rapidly used up under certain accelerated corrosion conditions. Corrosion inhibitors are often expensive and some have been shown to be environmentally unfriendly or toxic. Many of these are available only as liquids making them inappropriate for certain applications as they function best in certain concentration ranges. Cathodic protection can be an expensive protection means that requires skilled professionals for its design and application. It is more readily applicable to new structures, but is difficult and/or expensive to install on an existing structure. Surface passivation has been used relatively little because it requires control of the environment around the substrate metal surface.

In nature, stable materials exist at their lowest form of energy. Iron typically exists as iron oxide ore. Mankind spends a tremendous amount of money

refining and adding energy to the iron ore to create steel and other iron products with the necessary properties for fabrication of metal products and for construction of roads, bridges, buildings, and the like. The natural response of such products to the environment is to return to their lowest, most stable energy state, i.e., the iron oxide state. This corrosion process is accelerated when the products are exposed to corrosive constituents in the environment. Large amounts of time and money are expended annually in the use of coating materials to inhibit such corrosion.

10 Eight types of corrosion are defined by the National Society of Corrosion Engineers, namely: (1) General; (2) Localized; (3) Galvanic; (4) Environmental Cracking; (5) Erosion-Corrosion Cavitation and Fretting; (6) Intergranular; (7) Dealloying; and (8) High Temperature. General corrosion results from open exposure to corrosive conditions. Localized corrosion affects smaller portions of the metal surface than general corrosion but the rate of penetration may be very fast. Crevice corrosion is a form of localized corrosion resulting from corrosive exposure in a shielded location where oxygen depletion occurs. The oxygen depletion results in the development of acidic conditions which accelerate the corrosive loss of base metal. Electromotive corrosion is an accelerated form of localized corrosion due to stray electrical currents passing through an active corrosion cell.

 General corrosion, crevice corrosion and electromotive corrosion are typically the kinds of corrosion of primary concern with iron and steel products. However, this invention is not only applicable in inhibiting those kinds of corrosion, but also in inhibiting other types of corrosion.

 Galvanic corrosion occurs when two metals with different potentials or tendencies to corrode are in metal-to-metal contact. Fretting corrosion is wear or the damage that occurs at the interface of two contacting surfaces, at least one of which is metal, when they are subject to rubbing, i.e., minute slippage relative to

each other. Intergranular corrosion is a selective or localized attack at or adjacent to grain boundaries without appreciable attack in the grain. Dealloying corrosion is a phenomenon associated with selective removal of one or more components from an alloy.

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Crevice corrosion is a special form of corrosive action in that it typically may involve a bacterial or microbial attack accompanied by an environmental change in pH with anaerobic conditions. Microbes that promote corrosion of metals can be classed into five general groups: 1) acid producers which oxidize sulfur compounds to change sulfur compounds to sulfuric acid; 2) slime formers which aid in the production of anaerobic micro environments; 3) sulfate reducers that consume hydrogen and depolarize cathodic sites; 4) hydrogen feeders which feed on hydrocarbons; and 5) metal ion concentrators/oxidizers that work in conjunction with other microbes to create thick, bulky deposits to create concentration cells. Typically, more than one type of microbe is working at any one crevice corrosion site in a symbiotic relationship, fostering the growth of others. This form of attack is often hard to detect, since by definition initiation is often in the small crevices concealed in an anaerobic site. These sites often exhibit deep pitting, compromising the structural integrity of the base metals under attack.

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Conditions that favor the promulgation of corrosive microbes include anaerobic environments, pH in the range of 0.5-10 (depending on the type of microorganism), and high concentrations of hydrocarbons upon which the microbes feed. Metal strands used in concrete structures can be ideal initiation sites. The strands used in such structures are typically of 1x7 high strength steel construction. Unfortunately, almost as soon as such a concrete structure is placed, cracking begins to occur. These cracks allow water and other corrosive materials to penetrate the structure and thereby compromise the integrity of the structure. The cracks become not only ideal crevice corrosion sites, but also places for

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potential physical degradation of a structure by alternating freeze and thaw cycles with the hydraulic force of water breaking up the concrete.

5 The current cable market for post tensioned and pretensioned pre-stressed concrete is dominated by bare steel 1x7 strand. Strand is available with a fusion bonded epoxy coating with the surface of the epoxy containing an optional aluminum oxide grit to promote bonding with concrete (ASTM Specification A882/A882M). In addition, 1x7 strand containing grease and covered with polyethylene is also available for specific applications. For bridge stays and tower
10 supports, Conduits manufactured from plastic or steel materials such as galvanized steel or polyethylene are currently typically used as containment for individual strands or multiple bundles of strands. The conduits are commonly filled with grout to strengthen the assembly and to fill in the interstices. The alkaline nature of the grout passivates the surface of the steel from corrosion. Strand and wire
15 rope for the automotive industry and other general purpose uses currently typically have a zinc or zinc alloy hot dip coating and may be covered with a number of thermoplastic coatings. The zinc or zinc alloy coatings protect the surface of the steel from corrosion galvanically due to its sacrificial nature (it corrodes preferentially to steel).

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Organic plastic materials have also been used to fill the interstices between the wires on some cable products. Ceramic based, corrosion resistant coatings have been developed and are currently in use in automotive parking brake cable strand products. However, ceramic coatings are not usually suitable for wire rope
25 products because the abrasiveness of such coatings reduces fatigue life of the wire rope.

The use of bare strand products causes problems when exposed to corrosive environments. The strand surface is not protected from corrosive constituents in
30 the environment. Strand stored to be placed in casting beds (forms that are reused time and time again for making of structural elements of precast concrete) often

show signs of initial red rust before being surrounded by the protective encasement of concrete. In the case of strand used as a prestressor for concrete materials, corrosion can occur when corrosive constituents such as salts from deicing compounds, admixtures to the concrete, or marine environment migrate to the surface of the strand. Initially, the pH in concrete is near 12.0. Corrosiveness increases as the concrete pH drops or when carbonation occurs. Due to the chemical reactions incurred during the cure cycle of the concrete mixture, there are zones of cure that striate and promote cracking at the surface of the curing mixture. Depending upon the cure conditions, the types of admixtures and aggregates, and the surrounding physical conditions, this cracking may or may not be readily visible to the naked eye. The expansive forces caused by the development of corrosion on the steel strand or other steel reinforcement can also crack the concrete. Whatever their origin, cracks can accelerate the degradation of the concrete and also the degradation of prestressing strand (by exposing the steel), necessitating repair or replacement of the concrete member to avoid failure of the structure. Bare strand has no protection against corrosion except for the surrounding concrete. Rehabilitation projects often use sealers on cracked concrete to lessen the chance that water or other corrosive elements will enter the cracks and accelerate the degradation process. Typically these sealers only provide a physical barrier and do not address the underlying steel components that are the subject of the corrosive attack.

Epoxy coated strand, the only current commercial alternative to bare strand for pretension prestressing applications, has a number of limitations. The epoxy coating effectively offers only barrier protection against corrosive constituents. When the barrier has been compromised due to coating imperfections or field handling, corrosive constituents can get to the strand wires and cause local corrosion to develop. The corrosive constituents can then migrate beneath the epoxy coating, developing crevice corrosion cells and cause delamination of the epoxy coating from the surface of the strand wires. Crevice corrosion can cause rapid failure of strand wires as well as a reduction of the pH in the corrosion cell

area. The epoxy coating has good overall chemical resistance, but can be attacked by oxidizing materials such as chlorine, fluorine, and hypochlorite materials. Sodium hypochlorite is commonly used as a water treatment additive and for bleaching in the pulp and paper industries. The hypochlorite ion may also be
5 formed in alkaline environments (such as concrete) when chloride ions or chlorine is present.

Construction of precast members using epoxy coated strand requires the use of special jaws on the strand during the tensioning process. Even with the special
10 jaws, slippage sometimes occurs, causing removal of the epoxy coating and adding difficulty to the construction of the precast members. Jaws that are typically reused 60-70 times for bare strand often require cleaning after only two or three uses with epoxy coated strand.

15 It is common practice for post tension cables to be encased with hydrocarbon greases and sheathed with a polymeric coating that excludes oxygen. Strand and wire rope products filled with grease are typically limited to applications where high bond strength is not required (post tension applications) and bridges. Grease has been shown to offer good corrosion protection when
20 present in excess; however, bare areas can occur due to rubbing. Greases may be expelled during periods of high temperatures, and many oils and greases become acidic with the passage of time, increasing the threat of corrosion. This acidic condition speeds the ionic exchange between the surrounding electrolyte and the metal substrate. The grouting of strand tendons can lead to air pockets or voids
25 between the tendons where corrosive materials can collect. Some admixtures commonly used in grout formulations are corrosive with respect to steel reinforcement.

The interstices between the individual wires that form cables or strands
30 frequently show the first place of attack. A paper in 1985 described the process of a bio-film community as follows: (1) iron-oxidizing bacteria infiltrate metal

surfaces and put down "roots" to anchor a community; (2) slime formers and fungi are attracted to this site because of the nutrient availability and/or protection; (3) sulfate reducing bacteria thrive in this anaerobic layer producing copious amounts of corrosive hydrogen sulfide gas; (4) a layered aerobic/anaerobic stratification
5 forms typically with the first layer of bio-film protecting an underlying anaerobic community.

Electromotive corrosion, like crevice corrosion, is also an accelerated form of corrosion which may be due to stray electrical currents from nearby cathodic
10 protection systems or power cables, or to static electrical currents generated from frictional contact, as for example, between automobile tires and driving surfaces as well as gear and bearing friction (and subsequently discharged through the automotive parking brake cables).

15 Many different types of corrosive environments exist: Marine, Rust Belt, Water Treatment Facilities, Power Plants, Pulp and Paper Mills, and Chemical Process Plants. Natural corrosives such as salts from marine environments, and man-made corrosives such as acid pollutants, corrode infrastructures and metal products. Structures requiring protection from corrosive constituents include
20 roads, bridges, dams, parking garages, and piers. In that regard, people everywhere are increasing demands for snow and ice free roads, bridges, and parking garages through the use of deicing salts; unfortunately, these salts further contribute to the deterioration of infrastructure. Metal products requiring protection from corrosion constituents include metal parts of boats and marine
25 equipment, automobiles and aircraft.

Considerable effort has been expended by the construction and automobile industries, among others, to delay and reduce the rate of corrosion of steel. Such corrosion can result in failure not only of the steel, but also the elements and
30 structures the steel supports. For example, corrosion of reinforcing steel members in concrete is known to result in deterioration of the concrete. Such deterioration

is believed to be due in large part to the fact that the corrosion products tend to occupy a greater volume of space than the original steel, resulting in stresses on the surrounding concrete material. Structural distress may also occur due to a reduced cross-sectional area of the steel or to a loss of bond between the steel and the concrete.

In industrial applications, metal corrosion can be accelerated by several factors such as the infiltration of oxygen and moisture ("general corrosion") and the presence of stray electrical currents ("electromotive corrosion"). Metal corrosion can also be accelerated by bacterial attack in highly acidic (i.e., pH < 2.0), anaerobic environments on the metal surface ("microbiological induced corrosion").

One well-known method for preventing steel corrosion is galvanization. In particular, zinc and zinc alloys together with thermoplastic coverings are commonly used to coat strands and wire rope in many industries. Zinc and its alloys are known to protect the surface of steel sacrificially, in that zinc corrodes preferentially to steel. However, a major disadvantage of this treatment is that the zinc coating provides only temporary protection of the base metal. Also, the coating may corrode unevenly, jeopardizing the integrity of the underlying metal. Zinc electroplating processes used to galvanize ferrous substrates often lead to hydrogen embrittlement of steel products, notably the high strength, highly stressed steels. In addition, the corrosion of any galvanic zinc coating (electroplate, mechanical plate, cladding, thermal spray, hot dip, or zinc filled coating) can cause hydrogen embrittlement of high strength, highly stressed steels such as reinforcing strand used in concrete and bridge stays.

For the above reasons, many industries have begun to investigate alternative corrosion treatments. For example, most such treatments which have been developed for wire products involve coating or encapsulating the base metal with various compounds such as plastics, ceramics, epoxy resins, greases, and

other hydrocarbon-based substances. These substances may be applied either on the outside of the wire ropes or strands or in the interstices of the ropes or strands. However, these treatments only provide a physical barrier to corrosive elements such as moisture and oxygen, and they do not address the corrosion of the steel itself. Furthermore, even with such applications, the steel is still vulnerable to crevice corrosion, since highly acidic, anaerobic environments will often appear on the metal surface, thereby promoting bacterial attack.

Current industry standards for corrosion prevention center around the use of heavy metals (chromium, nickel, lead, cadmium, copper, mercury, barium, etc.) or heavy metal compounds to passivate or provide a barrier to inhibit, or galvanically sacrifice, and thereby protect the substrate metal beneath. The introduction of these materials into the environment, however, can lead to serious health consequences as well as substantial costs to contain or separate the materials or clean up environmental contamination. Dealing with corrosion, accordingly, is a continuing problem and better systems for preventing corrosion are still needed.

The present invention in a broad aspect resides in a system for inhibiting the corrosion of ferrous and other metals by passivating the metals. The invention in one general aspect resides in compositions in various forms which are applied to a metal, and which comprise a carrier component and one or more pH buffer components. The buffer may be particulate or liquid in form but is soluble or otherwise ionizable in water, and is selected to retain the proximity of the metal at a pH at which the metal is passive to corrosion. Generally, buffer in liquid form is preferred where a smoother coating is desired. Buffer in liquid form, such as buffer particles dissolved in aqueous solution, may solidify or dry after application on metal, but should remain ionizable and capable of redissolving when contacted by aqueous corrosive materials. We believe the buffer particles of this invention that have been dissolved are usually smaller upon drying than the buffer particles of this invention in particulate form, and hence allow a smoother appearance on

metal. We further believe such buffer particles that have been dissolved form a matrix or network upon drying.

5 The buffer particles preferably range in size in order to dissolve over extended periods of time and thereby provide a continuing buffering function. The carrier may take preferred forms such as films, gels, sealants, etc., depending on such factors as the type, configuration and service of the metal. The carrier may also vary in its physical and chemical nature, again depending on various factors. In general, the carrier should be sufficiently viscous to support the buffer
10 uniformly within the carrier.

The compositions of the invention preferably include components capable of inhibiting the corrosion of any given metal in the presence of moisture or other sources of corrosion promoters. The inhibitor components co-act with the buffer
15 components to provide protection against corrosion and may be specifically chosen to inhibit microbiological growth.

From the foregoing it becomes apparent that the invention provides an intelligent corrosion inhibiting system that not only passivates a metal facing
20 corrosion, but also maintains such protection over extended periods of time. The system does this by providing a buffered environment via the buffering agents. Corrosion protection, accordingly, is not limited to the use of reactive metals or barrier films traditionally employed in corrosion preventative coatings. Indeed an important feature of the invention resides in its environmentally friendly nature
25 and the "green" protection it provides. The invention purposely minimizes and preferably avoids use of heavy metal-type corrosion preventives or other preventives that may contaminate an application site or be introduced to the surrounding environment.

30 The intelligent nature of the systems of the invention is abetted by a choice of carriers and layering as reflected by the product or apparatus to be protected

against corrosion. Thus, as previously noted, the carrier may take the form of a gel, film, sealant, adhesive or other suitable medium. Further, one or more layers of the medium may be applied to a metal. In addition, one or more layers may be designed to be water repellant or to serve as barriers for corrosive materials such as air, carbon dioxide, chloride ions, etc.

The present invention is directed to (1) novel buffered compositions which may be applied to metal products for preventing or retarding corrosion; (2) methods for applying the buffered compositions to metal products, for example wire cables, such that corrosion-protection of the products is achieved through passivation; and (3) systems for in situ application to existing structures with metal reinforcement.

The compositions of the invention thus reside in a corrosion or rust preventive which includes a carrier in which is dispersed a buffer which serves to maintain a pH for a metal in contact with the carrier which is in the range of pH values wherein the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion. The carrier is in a form suitable for application to the metal for a long term or generally permanent basis. However, for gel application to wire rope, the gel may be reapplied in service as needed. Thus, following application to a metal surface, the carrier is preferably selected to adhere to the metal surface as an adhesive or gel or to be immobile or cured so as to remain on the surface.

The buffer component may be in the form of particles which preferably range in size from fine to coarse in order to provide a buffering function which is both prompt and enduring. Particle sizes thus may typically range from about $0.5\mu\text{M}$ to $850\mu\text{M}$, and preferably about $0.5\mu\text{M}$ to $500\mu\text{M}$. Particle size distribution may vary from case to case, depending on the atmosphere or environment in which the corrosion preventive must serve. In general, it appears that a preferred distribution for most applications is $0.5\mu\text{M}$ to $500\mu\text{M}$. However, for some wire rope applications, the recommended particle size is less than $20\mu\text{M}$.

Alternatively, the buffer component may be dissolved in solution, preferably an aqueous solution. After application to metal, the buffer components may dry or return to solid form, but should be readily capable of redissolving in the presence of corrosive liquid.

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The concentration of buffer in any given carrier preferably should be the maximum consistent with ease of handling and the stability of the overall composition.

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The function of buffers is well-known in that buffer solutions act to minimize changes in hydrogen ion concentration (pH) which would otherwise tend to occur as a result of chemical reactions. Once formulated, these solutions tend to resist further change due to outside influence. This makes it possible to tailor buffer response so as to resist pH changes caused by changes in temperature,
15 pressure, volume, redox potential or acidity, etc.

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Buffer solutions are typically prepared by mixing a weak acid and its salt or a weak base and its salt. Acidic buffers, for example, can be prepared using potassium chloride or potassium hydrogen phthalate with hydrochloric acid of appropriate concentrations. Neutral buffers can be prepared by mixing potassium dihydrogen phosphate and sodium hydroxide, for example. Alkaline (basic) buffers can be prepared by mixing borax or disodium hydrogen phosphate with sodium hydroxide, for example. Many more chemical combinations are possible, using appropriate chemicals to establish the proper sequence of proton transfer
25 steps coupled with the intended reactions. Buffer exchange rates may be modified by combinations of buffer materials that react at different ionic exchange rates; buffers of low-change type react more rapidly than high-change types.

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As noted above, the buffer compositions of the invention serve to keep the pH of the carrier in contact with a metal at a value at which the metal has a natural passivity toward corrosion. In the case of iron, steel, and other iron alloys

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such as stainless steel and monel alloy, the pH at which such materials have a natural passivity toward corrosion is in the range between about 8 and 13. In the case of aluminum and aluminum alloys, the range is between about 5 and 7. In the case of bronzes, the range is more often between about 7 and 10. In general, most metals suitable for use with the present invention are naturally passive to corrosion at pH values above about 3.0.

Materials that may serve as buffers in any given instance may vary considerably, depending on the pH at which the metal at hand has a natural passivity toward corrosion. Well-known buffers include alkali metal or alkali metal hydrogen tartrates, tetroxalates, phosphates, phthalates, borates, and the like, wherein the alkali metal is preferably sodium or potassium. Another commonly used buffer is calcium hydroxide. Preferred buffers include sodium and potassium silicates, and especially mixtures of such silicates. The buffer in any case should comprise dry particles in anhydrous or hydrated form or dissolved in solution, preferably aqueous solution. In general, the hydrated form of any given buffer is preferred over the anhydrous because of its more ready solubility in water.

The invention in one broad aspect may be considered as a macro-infiltrated, micro-laminated system in that high concentrations of a pH buffer are incorporated in a carrier or vehicle, and the carrier or vehicle ladened with the buffer is preferably applied to a metal product in a plurality of thin layers. When the particulate form of buffer is used, as noted earlier, the buffer particles are preferably present in a range of particle sizes so as to become active as buffers over an extended period of time.

When applied as films or coatings, the rust preventive compositions of the invention are preferably applied in a macro-infiltrated, micro-laminated form. The inner layers typically comprise multiple thin layers of a carrier laden with liquid buffers or particulate buffers of varying particle size to impart a self-activating,

time-release buffering action. The liquid buffers preferably dry after application onto the metal they are to protect.

One or more intermediate layers may serve as barrier layers for the underlying buffer layers. Thus, potassium silicate particles or liquid may be incorporated in one or more intermediate layers to bar air and moisture from reaching the buffer layer or the metal. Potassium silicate reacts with carbon dioxide to form an insoluble film which protects the underlying buffer layers from premature dissolution.

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The intermediate barrier layers may be coated with one or more layers which have sealant or water-repellant properties. A carrier macro-infiltrated with aluminum silicate particles, for example, forms layers with strong hydrophobic qualities. The carrier in this instance may be a polymeric material such as polyacrylic, silicone, polyurethane, epoxy, vinyl polymer or polyvinylacetate.

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The present invention has particular application in protecting cables and wire ropes which are made of multiple strands of wire. In this application it is generally preferred that the compositions of the invention be in the form of a viscous jelly-like carrier macro-infiltrated with one or more particulate buffers. The product preferably resembles a thixotropic gel which tends to become fluid under shear, but sets up to a relatively firm structure. The thixotropic nature renders desirable physical properties to the composition. However, a thixotropic nature is not necessarily required. The gel may be applied to individual strands during fabrication of a rope or cable, but it may also be injected into and along a rope or cable following fabrication. Thixotropic properties of the gel enable the buffer composition to flow along the interstices between and surrounding the strands which form the rope or cable. The thixotropic properties also enable the material to take a much more permanent position once injected into a rope or cable, thereby providing long term protection.

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As noted earlier, wire rope and cable are especially subject to crevice corrosion. The present invention by its gel formulations is especially effective in dealing with such corrosion. Particularly effective are formulations which include not only a buffer such as an alkali metal silicate but also a bactericide and/or
5 fungicide, preferably a metal borate, such as zinc borate.

This invention is also very effective in protecting and rehabilitating existing infrastructures through the use of a pumpable thixotropic composition that is applied into existing cracks of a supporting concrete structure. The composition
10 reacts to changes in the environment that are conducive to corrosion and releases buffers to change the pH of the site surrounding rebars or other metal structures to be protected. When a tendency for pH drop is encountered, the reactive components of the composition work to passivate the surface of the metal and actively tie up any chloride ions. Once the composition is pumped into a
15 structure, its thixotropic nature is activated and it becomes a prevention agent for the physical ingress of fluids. By raising the existing pH of the corrosion site, corrosion that is already taking place is countered and further changes reduced or eliminated.

20 The present invention in a broad aspect resides in an intelligent corrosion inhibiting system that passivates the material to be protected and provides long term protection by maintaining a buffered environment via solubility of buffering compounds such that corrosion is not likely to occur. Although the invention may be used to supplement and boost the performance of sacrificial coatings and
25 platings, the system of the invention is not dependent on any reactive metals or barrier films traditionally found in corrosion preventative coatings. Indeed, an important aspect of this invention lies in its environmentally friendly nature and the "green" protection it provides.

30 The method or system of the invention for preventing corrosion can be readily implemented using gels, coatings, films, sealants, adhesives, or the like as

carriers for a buffering material. Appropriate buffer materials are chosen such that, when contacted by moisture, they dissolve and buffer the proximity of the metal substrate in the pH range that imparts natural passivity to the substrate. A significant feature of buffering the proximity of the substrate is that the buffer will resist changes in pH away from the passive range of the substrate and thereby resist potential corrosion. A time release feature may be obtained with a particulate buffer where the particles are of varying size. A time release feature may similarly be obtained with a liquid buffer which dries after application. Small particles dissolve completely for short duration protection, while larger particles require a longer time frame to completely dissolve and offer longer duration protection. The buffer dissolution and migration out of the carrier is controlled by the concentration gradient. This feature adds an intelligent characteristic to the coating system whereby if the moisture in the proximity of the substrate contains sufficient buffer materials, the rate of dissolution and migration of the buffers from the carrier decreases.

As noted earlier, the compositions of the invention may be employed in many forms especially films, coatings, gels, sealants and adhesives. Each of these forms is discussed below.

Films and Coatings

The buffer technology of the invention may be incorporated in films and other coatings to produce a smart, macro-infiltrated, micro-laminated coating system. This coating system provides corrosion protection to the substrate metal via time release of buffer materials when the coating system is compromised by damage and moisture is present. The coating system does not require, and preferably excludes, the use of environmentally undesirable heavy metals in elemental or non-elemental form. The coating system includes one or more coating layers which are micro-infiltrated with solid, particulate, buffer materials

or liquid buffer materials. The buffer materials may be added to water borne resin systems and solvent borne resin systems as long as they are compatible. Aqueous polymers are preferred carriers for buffers in liquid form and include water-reducible alkyds and modified alkyds, acrylic latexes, acrylic epoxy hybrids, water
5 reducible epoxies, polyurethane dispersions, vinyls and ethylene vinyl acetates.

The buffer materials are generally unaffected by the curing methods and may be used in resin systems which cure via air dry, heat, chemical cross-linking, ultra-violet, and other curing mechanisms. These buffer materials may be added
10 in particulate form or dissolved in a solution, preferably an aqueous solution. The particulate buffer materials may be added into the coating systems in a range of particle sizes to achieve a time release feature. The buffer materials applied in dissolved form will form a buffer network or matrix within the carrier and will also effect a time release feature.

15

When a coating has been damaged and is contacted by moisture, the buffers begin to dissolve and migrate out of the coating to buffer the proximity of the metal substrate to be protected. The smaller buffer particulates dissolve more quickly and offer rapid buffering for a shorter duration. The larger particulates
20 require more time to completely dissolve, thus offering a longer protection duration and time release feature. The rates of dissolution of the buffer materials are dependent on the concentration gradient of the buffer materials between the interior of the coating and the area surrounding the coating. Thus, when moisture first enters the proximity of the coating, dissolution and migration of the buffer
25 materials occur. As the concentration of buffer materials outside the coating increases, the rate of dissolution and migration of buffers from the coating decreases. As the concentration of buffer materials outside the coating decreases, the buffers are replenished by dissolution and migration from the coating. This characteristic of the buffered coating provides a smart feature to the coating
30 system.

Buffer materials are chosen based on the type of substrate to be protected. Metal substrates may be protected from corrosion by passivating the substrate surface. This passivation may generally be accomplished only in certain pH ranges which, in turn, depend on the specific substrate to be protected. For
5 example, iron based alloys are passivated with an alkaline pH (pH 8-12). This pH range is preferably accomplished with sodium silicate and/or potassium silicate powders, but other alkaline materials may be used. A blend of sodium and potassium silicates is especially useful for achieving viscosity control in aqueous base formulations.

10

Potassium silicate powder materials may also be incorporated as an insolubilizer in a secondary layering outside of the primary buffer layering. The materials react with carbon dioxide to form an insoluble film which protects the primary buffer layering from premature dissolution. An outer, tertiary water-
15 repellant layering macro-infiltrated with aluminum silicate may be used to impart hydrophobicity to the coating system. Aluminum silicate is largely insoluble in water.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, buffered films or layers are
20 employed with barrier layers which overlay the buffered layers, and also with outer, water repellant layers which overlay the barrier layers.

All of the layers are infiltrated with particles or with liquid to form a macro-infiltrated, micro-laminated coating system. The inner most layers
25 comprise appropriately chosen buffer materials to impart a smart, time-release buffering to achieve surface passivation of the substrate metal. An intermediate coating layer acts as a barrier to protect the buffering layers. A top layer comprises a polymeric film macro-infiltrated with a aluminum silicate or other materials to achieve hydrophobicity (water repellence). In addition, various
30 pigments and corrosion inhibitors may be incorporated into these coatings. Where desired, these coatings can contain sacrificial metals or be applied over a basecoat

containing elemental or non-elemental metals or conversion coatings, such as a zinc plating with or without a chromate conversion coating. The corrosion protection already afforded metals by traditional zinc or zinc alloy platings over metals, with or without chromates, receive a significant boost and reinforcement in corrosion protection with the coatings of this invention, and particularly with such coatings comprising sodium silicate buffers. More significantly, the coatings of this invention may be applied over phosphate treated surfaces, particularly zinc phosphate, iron phosphate, and manganese phosphate, which may be substituted effectively for environmentally unfriendly chromates to provide "greener" corrosion protection. Thus, for such applications, the macroinfiltrated, microlaminated system offers the possibility of eliminating the toxic and environmentally unfriendly chromates without sacrificing protection against corrosion.

Applications for the films and coatings of the invention include, for example, components for the automotive industry, home-consumer products, construction and infrastructures, aerospace industry components, and other outdoor or corrosive applications where the use of heavy metals in elemental or non-elemental form is environmentally undesirable. The films and coatings may be applied to new products or over conventional platings to extend the useful service life of the plated component.

Gels

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These are suspensions in which a dispersed phase of buffer agent, preferably in particulate form, is combined with a continuous phase to produce a viscous jelly-like product. In the instant invention a synthetic oil is preferably used for the continuous phase. The buffer system is added to provide protection specific for the application.

30

Gels exists in a state somewhere between liquid and solid and can be tailored to act like either one or the other. Thixotropic gels allow application at a state approaching liquid for ease of insertion into cracks and subsequent return to solid nature to physically resist water intrusion. The buffered gels of the invention
5 form an excellent vehicle of transport for attacking corrosion sites that have developed within a surrounding concrete envelope. The gels and their chemicals can reach deep into the structure and then be localized to passivate a metal (steel) surface. Any chloride ions introduced into the concrete can be chemically bound by reactive components of the gel, and deterioration of the structure and
10 reinforcing steel thereby arrested.

Thixotropic gels employing synthetic oils as a continuous phase or carrier have proven effective in practice of the invention. Examples of synthetic oils include oils based on synthesized hydrocarbon fluids, alkyl benzenes, dibasic acid
15 esters, polyol esters, polyglycols, olefin oligomers, polybutenes; cycloaliphatics, silicones, silicate esters, polyphenyl ethers, and halogenated fluids. These fluids can be tailored to have a controlled molecular structure which exhibits the best properties of a petroleum based (mineral oil) system as well as properties not found in hydrocarbon greases. Petroleum hydrocarbon greases fail at temperatures
20 approaching 350°F, while some synthetics maintain excellent properties up to 800°F.

Gels formed with the above synthetic fluids may be filled with many different buffers, preferably particulate buffers, and special components such as
25 barrier materials and corrosion inhibitors. Attractive gels have been filled with sodium silicate, potassium silicate, and zinc borate in amounts of about ten percent by volume each, totaling about 30 percent by volume.

An especially applicable synthetic gel is based on a synthetic polyolefin
30 fluid (alpha decene) available under the trademark NYOGEL® from William F. Nye Inc. Specific formulations have included ten percent by volume each of

sodium silicate, potassium silicate and zinc borate. Silver nitrate may be added in high chloride ion environments.

Applications for the gels of the invention include:

5

1. Wire rope used in aircraft, marine, mining, automotive, oilfield, and transportation applications, both as a lubricant and for corrosion protection;

10

2. Strand used in construction such as prestressed cables and post tensioned cables in concrete, and bridge stays typically found in stay bridges, parking garages, ground anchors, concrete buildings, railroad ties, concrete aqueduct pipes, and water and chemical containment vessels;

15

3. Gels injected in cracks in concrete for rehabilitation purposes;

4. Sluice gates for water/chemical containers;

5. Anti-seize compounds;

20

6. Globe valves/gate valves in corrosive environments; and

7. Suspension bridge cables.

The gels may be applied to wire ropes, cables and strand during fabrication or in the field before or after the wire ropes, cables or strand are positioned for use.

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Sealants

In this form, particulate agents are dispersed in an organic or synthetic substance that is formulated to be soft enough to pour or extrude, but is also
5 capable of subsequent hardening to form a permanent flexible bond with a metal substrate. Typically, sealants are synthetic polymers such as silicones, urethanes, acrylics, polychloroprenes, or the like which are semisoluble before application and later become elastomeric. A few of the best known sealants are natural
10 products such as linseed oil, putty, asphalt and various waxes. Addition of an appropriate buffer system of the invention acts to protect metallic structures from corrosion.

Applications for sealants of the invention include:

- 15 1. Household and industrial caulking employed to address weather or water sealing needs typically created by lap joints of similar or dissimilar materials;
2. Ship building, automobile, and aircraft, which are additional
20 examples of industries which create a myriad of metal lap joints resulting in potential crevice corrosion sites; and
3. Foamable sealants used in automobile and aircraft applications to fill
voids, provide water seals and to deaden sound.

25

Adhesives

In this form, the buffers of the invention may be dispersed in organic,
30 inorganic and synthetic polymers that provide chemical and/or physical bonds between metal substrates for a strong joint, as opposed to sealants that remain

pliable. Other suitable adhesive type carriers include rubber and latex based materials, as well as hot melt formulated from polyethylene, polyvinyl acetate, polyamides, hydrocarbon resins, and also natural asphalts, bitumens, resinous materials and waxes. These adhesive materials formulated with the appropriate
5 buffer systems of the invention provide substrate protection from general corrosion, dissimilar metal corrosion, and crevice corrosion.

Applications for adhesives of the invention include any metal lap joints designed for adhesive bonding for new assemblies or repair.

10

Table A gives examples of suitable buffering components which may be used in accordance with the present invention, while Table B gives examples of suitable weight ratios of these buffering components for different pH values. Of course, other weak acid/conjugate base or weak base/conjugate acid systems may
15 be used, provided they are compatible with the base carrier matrix.

Table A - Examples of Buffering Compounds

	<u>Chemical Name</u>	<u>Formula</u>
5	Boric Acid	H_3BO_3
	Citric Acid	$H_3C_6H_5O_7 \cdot H_2O$
	Sodium Hydroxide	$NaOH$
	Trisodium Phosphate Dodecahydrate	$Na_3PO_4 \cdot 12H_2O$
10	Potassium Silicate	SiO_2/K_2O 1.6-2.5 wt. ratio
	Sodium Silicate	SiO_2/Na_2O 2.0-3.22 wt. ratio
	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate	$KHC_8O_4H_4$
	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate	KH_2PO_4
	Borax	$Na_2B_4O_7$
15	Sodium Hydrogen Carbonate	$NaHCO_3$
	Disodium Phosphate Dodecahydrate	$Na_2HPO_4 \cdot 12H_2O$
	Sodium Acetate	$NaOOCCH_3$
20	Disodium Phosphate	Na_2HPO_4

Table B - Examples of Weight Ratios of Buffering Components
for Various pH Values

5	<u>Desired pH</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Chemical</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Chemical</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Chemical</u>
	3.0	1.00	Boric Acid	0.84	Citric Acid	0.18	Trisodium Phosphate
	3.5	1.00	Boric Acid	0.84	Citric Acid	0.27	Trisodium Phosphate
	4.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	196.00	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate		
10	4.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	29.30	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate		
	5.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	11.30	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate		
	5.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	6.97	Potassium Hydrogen Phthalate		
	6.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	30.40	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate		
	6.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	12.20	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate		
15	7.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	5.84	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate		
	7.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	4.14	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate		
	8.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	3.64	Potassium Dihydrogen Phosphate		
	8.5	1.00	Boric Acid	0.84	Citric Acid	4.80	Trisodium Phosphate (12 H ₂ O)
	9.0	1.00	Boric Acid	0.84	Citric Acid	5.82	Trisodium Phosphate (12 H ₂ O)
20	9.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	13.55	Borax		

10.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	6.52	Borax
10.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	5.25	Borax
11.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	2.31	Sodium Hydrogen Carbonate
11.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	8.00	Disodium Acid Phosphate (12H ₂ O)
12.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	1.30	Disodium Acid Phosphate (12H ₂ O)
12.5	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	15.00	Disodium Acid Phosphate
13.0	1.00	Sodium Hydroxide	1.00	Sodium Acetate

For example, a buffering system comprising a 1.00 :: 30.40 weight ratio of sodium hydroxide to potassium dihydrogen phosphate would be suitable for protecting aluminum and aluminum alloys from corrosion, in accordance with the present invention. In using the above table for buffering systems applied in a liquid phase, the indicated appropriate weight of buffer is dissolved in water.

15

This invention finds particular application in the manufacture of wire cable to provide corrosion resistance to the cable. The invention may also be applied after manufacture of the cable and even after the cable or metal structure has been installed to provide corrosion resistance to the cable, or to retard or halt corrosion of the cable. An environment is created surrounding the substrate that is not conducive to corrosion initiation.

20

As used herein, the terms "cable" or "wire cable" and "wire product" shall be understood to include wire ropes and cables having multiple wire strands or filaments. The term "wire" shall be understood to include a metal bar or rod, as well as a thread or strand. A "cable" or "wire cable" as used herein may be

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comprised of a single wire or multiple wires. Cables for use in pretensioning and post-tensioning concrete typically have one central wire, sometimes called a "king" wire, usually with six wires wrapped around it (although additional layers or wraps may be added dependent upon any particular application). It is to be noted, however, that this invention is not limited to cables of such form or for such use. In general, the present invention may be applied to any metal surface where corrosion protection is desired.

In one embodiment of this invention, a gel is formulated that contains buffers in sufficient quantity to enable the gel to buffer pH in the range in which the metal to be corrosion-protected is naturally passive to corrosion. For protecting steel, iron or iron alloy, a gel comprising a polyalphaolefin (1-decene) base and about 10% by volume sodium silicate, about 10% by volume potassium silicate and about 10% by volume zinc borate has been found very effective. Such a composition, when applied to the steel, iron or iron alloy surface, provides a pH buffer for the metal in the pH range between 8-13.

The base component of the gel may be selected from alkylated aromatics, phosphate esters, perfluoroalkylpolyethers, polyesters, olefins, chlorotrifluoroethylene, silahydrocarbons, phosphazenes, dialkylcarbonates, oligomers, polybutenes, and polyphenyl esters, as well as unsaturated polyglycols, silicones, silicate esters, cycloaliphatic hydrocarbons, and dibasic acid esters. For protecting or passivating steel, iron or iron alloys, a polyalphaolefin base oil having a kinematic viscosity in the range of about 30 - 1,400 centistokes at 40°C has been found especially effective. Other properties to consider when choosing an appropriate polyalphaolefin base oil are molecular weight, molecular branching, thermal stability, and hydrophobicity, depending on the application. The polyalphaolefin base oil is thickened to a gel with thickeners known to the art of grease manufacturers such as polytetrafluoroethylene or silica. Buffer materials are also suitable as thickeners as long as they are compatible with the base oil.

Generally, low molecular weight, synthetic, hydrocarbon oils provide greater ease in designing and manufacturing a gel with particular desired characteristics but are more costly than less refined, high molecular weight, petroleum hydrocarbon oils. Less refined hydrocarbons may also have the disadvantage of containing sulfide compounds which can feed sulfate reducing bacteria and, in turn, tend to corrode metals such as steel, iron and iron alloys.

In another embodiment of this invention, a polymer film or adhesive is formulated that contains buffers in a sufficient quantity to enable the film or adhesive to buffer pH in the pH range in which the metal to be corrosion-protected is naturally passive to corrosion. The polymer may be a thermoplastic, thermosetting, or cross-linked system. Examples of such systems include epoxies, acrylics, polyurethanes, silicones, polyesters, alkyds, vinyls, phenolics, fluoropolymers, and latexes. For protecting steel, iron or iron alloy, a polymer-based film or adhesive comprising about 10% by volume sodium silicate, about 10% by volume potassium silicate, and about 10% by volume zinc borate has proven very effective.

Films and adhesives of the invention are preferably applied while the polymer carrier or base is in a low viscosity range to help ensure complete coating of the metal to be corrosion-protected. The viscosity of the polymer-base is preferably between about 100 and 15,000 centipoise (25°C), depending on the application. Brushed surfaces (for example) require a more viscous base than ones that will be coated by a more fluid spray, dip or dip-spin. Thereafter, the film/adhesive may be cured by suitable methods known in the art (generally exposure to air) to produce a protective, buffering system around the base metal.

In still another application of the invention, buffer materials are added to friction materials such as those used in the manufacture of brakes. Typical examples of such friction materials are phenolic thermoset resins containing iron powder and/or steel fibers or other metal fibers for reinforcement. Such buffer

materials may be added as particles to the dry mixture of the iron powder and/or steel or metal fibers. Preferably, such buffer materials are applied to the iron powder and steel or metal fibers themselves, for example by a spray dry technique such as by spraying atomized or vaporized sodium silicate solutions or other buffer material on the powder and fibers and then condensing it to a film on the powder and fibers prior to formulation of the dry mixture. A Glatt spray dryer, for example, may be used to accomplish this technique. In this application of the invention, buffer materials such as sodium silicate are preferably added to the metal to be corrosion protected in two coats, with the inner coating adjacent the metal remaining soluble to retain its buffering capacity and the outer coating over such inner coating being applied at a higher temperature capable of fusing the outer coating into an insoluble barrier-type layer or more preferably a metal chloride, for example, zinc chloride, is applied to the buffer coated powder and fibers, again for example by a spray dry technique, such that a film or shell of partially insoluble metal chloride covers or surrounds the buffer coated powder and fibers. The solubility of the resulting materials decreases with the increasing quantity of metal chloride applied to the buffer coated powder and fibers and hence with the increasing thickness of the metal chloride covering.

In still another application of the invention, buffer materials are added to particulate buffer materials, for example by a spray dry technique. That is, vaporized sodium silicate or other buffer material may be sprayed on particulate sodium silicate or other buffer. A metal chloride, preferably zinc chloride, is then applied, again for example by a spray dry technique, over the buffer coated buffer particles. The metal chloride provides a partially insoluble cover to the coated particle. For example, zinc chloride applied over a sodium silicate buffer results in a zinc silicate film covering the buffer coated buffer particles. The more metal chloride applied, the greater the degree of insolubility of the covering. Such coated buffer particles may be added to dry mixtures of friction materials as an alternative to, or in addition to, buffer coating of the friction materials themselves

- 32 -

as discussed above. In such use, the coated buffer particles provide corrosion control when the friction materials are included in brake pads, for example.

Other materials may be added to the compositions of the present invention to further tailor them to their desired applications. For example, additives such as ceramic silicates (zircon for example) or silicas (fumed silica, silicon dioxide, amorphous silica, for example) may be used to control viscosity and improve thermal resistance. Polymers such as polyethylene powder, nylon, Teflon® or tetrafluoroethylene fluorocarbon and polyester may be added to provide extreme pressure tolerance properties for improved fatigue performance. Pigments may be added to provide color. Such additives should be selected to be compatible with the primary purpose of the invention, which is to serve as a pH buffer.

Materials may also be added to enhance the buffering or corrosion resistance of any given metal. For example, silver nitrate may be added to react with possible chlorides to form precipitates with limited solubility, thereby helping to prevent the chlorides from being available to corrode steel, iron, or iron alloys.

Preferably, the compositions and methods of this invention will not employ heavy metals such as zinc, chromium, nickel, lead, cadmium, copper or lithium, especially in pure metal form. Zinc borate is generally acceptable because it has very limited solubility. Concern is greatest for pure metals or soluble cations. The invention by nature does not release components except where needed, such as hydroxyl ions to buffer pH, and thus may be generally considered to be environmentally safe or friendly, or of providing "green" protection.

In applying the invention, once a composition of the invention has been formulated with the ability to act as a buffer for a desired pH range -- the pH range at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion -- the composition is positioned proximate the metal it is to protect.

For example, the gel, adhesive, and film compositions of the invention may be applied to metal cable during manufacture. In such application the buffered carrier is preferably applied completely to at least the central or "king" wire as well as the interstices immediately surrounding the "king" wire. The film or adhesive compositions may be cured to provide a more permanent, protective, buffering region around the treated wires.

Whether or not the compositions have been applied to the wires used to manufacture a cable, they may be applied after the cable has been made or installed. Thus, the compositions of the invention may be pumped through holes or cracks in reinforced concrete to reach and protect the underlying reinforcing bars, cables or the like. Thixotropic gel compositions are especially attractive for this service.

In certain applications, compositions of the invention, once they have been applied, may be given an outer coating in the form of a thermoplastic, paint or the like. For example, bridge stays are constantly exposed to adverse marine environments; thermoplastic or other polymeric outer sheaths on the stays help to protect the stays after they have been coated with a composition of the invention. When the composition is a gel type to be used on cable applications where bonding with concrete is desired or when an outer coating is to be applied, the composition should be restricted to covering the inner wires of a cable to help prevent adhesion problems involving the composition and the concrete or polymeric outer coating.

The use of an outer polymeric sheath is not always advocated in the case of cable which is used in pretensioned or prestressed concrete, because the cable generally must bond with the concrete; an outer sheath might very likely interfere with such bonding.

An advantage of the invention is that its effectiveness is not dependent on, nor does it need, an outer coating or covering.

The compositions of the invention may also be applied to various metal assemblies. For example, adhesives of the present invention may be applied to lap joints wherein two metal sheets are overlapped and joined by welding, riveting, mechanical folding, or the like. The buffered adhesives are applied to protect the metal joints from corrosion.

The gel and adhesive compositions of the invention have particular application to nut/bolt assemblies to prevent corrosion-induced seizing. In such applications, the gel is preferably applied to the threads of the nut or bolt both before and after the units are connected.

Tests have shown that metals coated with gel, film, and adhesive compositions of this invention show substantial resistance to corrosion. Even after corrosion has begun, applications of the compositions in accordance with the invention have resulted in a halting or significant retarding of further corrosion. Thus, this invention has application not only in manufacturing metal products, but also in on site prevention and rehabilitation of metal products.

To further illustrate the present invention, but not by way of limitation, the following examples are provided.

Example 1

The following materials were used:

- 12 inch long bare steel No. 5 rebar (ASTM-A615) samples, available from Chapparral Steel Co.;
- Synthetic Polyalphaolefin Hydrocarbon Gelled Lubricant (NYOGEL 747G) from William F. Nye, Inc.;
- Powdered Potassium Silicate (KASIL SS®) from PQ Corp.;
- Sodium Silicate GD®, available from PQ Corp.;

Particulate zinc borate (BOROGARD ZB®), available from U.S. Borax Co.

5 First, approximately 50 ml each of the potassium silicate, sodium silicate, and zinc borate powders were mixed together for approximately 15 minutes to provide a homogeneous buffered composition. A 24 ml sample of the dry powder mixture was then slowly added to a 40 ml sample of the NYOGEL® polyalphaolefin material to produce a gel with 60% buffering agents by volume to achieve a buffer range of pH 10-12.

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Three sets of rebar samples were then prepared for testing. In all of the samples, surface scale and corrosion initially present on the rebar was left undisturbed.

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The first set was designated as the control group; consequently, no treatment was applied to these rebar samples. The second set was prepared by brushing on approximately 0.50 gram/inch of pure NYOGEL 747G® gel to the middle 5 inches of the rebar samples, while the third set was prepared by brushing on approximately 0.68 gram/inch of the buffered NYOGEL® mixture to the middle 5 inches of the rebar samples. The samples were then exposed to a 5% salt solution in a constant temperature environment for 1632 hours, in accordance with ASTM B117-73. The extent of corrosion on the test parts was determined by visual inspection at time intervals of 24-72 hours.

20

Table C

Test Part	Salt Spray	
	% Red Rust*	Test Hours
Control rebar	100%	24
Pure gel rebar	100%	96
Buffered gel rebar	38%	1632
* Average of three samples per set		

The pure NYOGEL 747G® gel rebars had red corrosion spots beneath the gel at 24 hours and were completely covered with red rust at 96 hours. On the other hand, the buffered gel rebars, after showing initial signs of corrosion under the gel at 96 hours, maintained the total level of corrosion of each rebar below 40% throughout the experiment. It is evident, therefore, that the buffered gel material is capable of slowing both the onset and progression of corrosion on metal surfaces, compared to pure gel compounds.

Example 2

The following materials were used:

- Bare steel M12X40 bolts and CL08 nuts from Bossard (DIN 933 & 934);
- Zinc plated steel 5/16 inch x 2.5 inches long hex head bolts with NF threads and corresponding nuts from Westlakes Hardware;
- AM940126 Experimental synthetic polyalphaolefin hydrocarbon gelled lubricant from William F. Nye, Inc.;
- powdered potassium silicate (KASIL SS®), available from PQ Corp.;

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- Sodium silicate GD , available from PQ Corp.;
- Zinc borate (BOROGARD ZB®), available from U.S. Borax Co.;
- Anti-seize and lubricating compound (NEVER-SEEZ®) from Bostik.

5 First, approximately 25 ml each of the potassium silicate, sodium silicate, and zinc borate were mixed together for approximately 15 minutes to provide a homogeneous buffered composition. A 75 ml sample of the dry powder mixture was then slowly added to a 250 ml quantity of the AM940126 to produce a gel with 30% buffering agents by volume which produced a buffered range of 9-11
10 pH.

Four sets of bare steel bolt/nut assemblies and four sets of zinc plated steel bolt/nut assemblies were then prepared for testing. In all of the samples, surface scale and corrosion initially present on the nuts/bolts were left undisturbed.
15 Furthermore, all of the samples were tested with the nuts screwed to a point midway on the bolts.

The first set of bare steel bolt/nut assemblies and the first set of zinc plated steel bolt/nut assemblies were designated as the control groups; consequently, no
20 treatment was applied to these samples. The remaining three sets of bare steel bolt/nut assemblies and the remaining three sets of zinc plated steel bolt/nut assemblies were prepared by coating each of the bolt/nut assemblies with pure AM940126 gel (set 2), buffered AM940126 gel (set 3), and NEVER-SEEZ® (set 4). (NEVER-SEEZ® contains hydrocarbon and heavy metal components and
25 presents environmental considerations; its manufacturer claims it protects against extreme heat, corrosion, rust, pitting, seizure and carbon fusion.) These compounds were brushed on to their respective bolts to obtain a uniform coating which completely filled the threads. The nuts were then screwed on to the bolts, and excess material was removed by brush. Upon assembly, the threads at the
30 end of the bolts, where the nuts had passed, were recoated with the appropriate material.

The samples were then exposed to a 5% salt solution in a constant temperature environment for 1464 hours (or until failure, whichever occurred sooner), in accordance with ASTM B117-73. Seizing was determined by manually checking the nuts for movement on the bolts. If more force was required to
 5 initiate movement than could be generated with finger pressure, the specimen was deemed as failed.

Table D

10	Test Part	Hours to Seizing*
	Control bare steel assemb.	462
	Pure gel bare steel assemb.	732
	Buffered gel bare steel assemb.	1104
	NEVER-SEEZ® bare steel assemb.	1356
15	Control zinc plated steel assemb.	816
	Pure gel zinc plated steel assemb.	2811
	Buffered gel zinc plated steel assemb.	2483
	NEVER-SEEZ® zinc plated steel assemb.	1598

20 * Average of four samples per set

The buffer materials which were added to the AM940126 synthetic polyalphaolefin gel significantly extended the amount of time to development of a seized condition on the bare steel bolt/nut assemblies compared to the AM940126
 25 material by itself and offered a performance comparable to the commercial anti-seize compound that was tested. From an environmental standpoint the buffered gel is superior to the commercial product.

Three of the zinc plated samples with buffered gels performed as well as or
 30 better than the rest of the zinc plated and bare steel samples. However, for

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unknown reasons one zinc plated sample with buffered gel and one zinc plated sample with NEVER-SEEZ® failed significantly earlier than the other samples in their respective groups. This early failure resulted in a lower than expected average for the buffered set--lower than with the pure AM940126 gel. However, both the AM940126 gel and the buffered gel out-performed the NEVER-SEEZ® material in the zinc plated nut/bolt assemblies.

Example 3

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The following materials were used:

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- NeoCryl®A640 acrylic polymer from Zeneca Resins;
- Texanol® ester alcohol (2,2,4-Trimethyl-1,3-Pentanediol) from Eastman Chemical;
- BenzoFlex® 9-88 (Dipropylene Glycol Dibenzoate) from Velsicol Chemical Corp.;
- Ethyl alcohol, Reagent Grade, available from Aldrich Chemical Co.;
- Columbia Blue Dye D298 from Day-Glo Color Corp.;
- N grade sodium silicate liquid from PQ Corp.;
- Zinc electroplated steel conduit end-fitting assemblies. (Fabricated metal fittings assembled onto the ends of parking brake cable conduit assemblies.)

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A generic acrylic polymer formulation was prepared with the following components:

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	<u>wt. %</u>
NeoCryl®A640	79.2
Texanol®	10.2
BenzoFlex® 9-88	1.4
Water	8.5
Ethyl Alcohol	0.6
Columbia Blue Dye D298	0.1

Approximately 15 ml of N grade sodium silicate was slowly added (mixed) into 85 ml of the generic acrylic polymer formulation. A first group of zinc plated steel conduit end-fitting assemblies were dipped one at a time into the acrylic polymer formulation containing the liquid sodium silicate, and allowed to drip off and air dry for 24 hours.

A second group of zinc plated steel end-fittings from the same lot of plated fittings was dipped one at a time into just the generic acrylic polymer formulation (no sodium silicate) and allowed to drip off and air dry for 24 hours.

10

In addition, a third group of zinc plated steel end-fittings from the same lot of plated fittings was retained for testing as a control.

Six pieces from each of the three groups of fittings were subjected to ASTM-B117 salt spray testing and provided the following results.

15

20	GROUP	AVERAGE HOURS TO FIRST RED	AVERAGE HOURS TO 5% RED (FAILURE)
	Zinc Plated Only	36	56
	Zinc Plated With Acrylic Polymer Coating	72	104
25	Zinc Plated With Acrylic Polymer Coating Containing Liquid Sodium Silicate	364	> 428

30

The addition of the liquid sodium silicate to act as a buffer according to the teachings of this invention yielded approximately a 5 times improvement in corrosion resistance.

It is to be understood that the foregoing is illustrative only and that other means and techniques may be employed without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

CLAIMS:

1. A composition for inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises a carrier material adapted to cover the metal and containing a buffer material capable of buffering the composition to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.
5
2. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier further comprises a viscous fluid capable of forming a permanent coating on the metal.
10
3. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier further comprises a gel.
15
4. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier material comprises an adhesive capable of adhering to the metal.
20
5. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier comprises a polymer.
- 25 6. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier comprises a synthetic polymer.
7. The composition of claim 1 in which the buffer material is in particulate form.
30

8. The composition of claim 1 in which the buffer material is in liquid form.

5 9. The composition of claim 1 in which the buffer material comprises an alkali metal silicate.

10 10. The composition of claim 1 in which the buffer material comprises a mixture of sodium and potassium silicates.

15 11. The composition of claim 1 which further comprises a material capable of reacting with the chloride ion to form a precipitate insoluble in water.

12. The composition of claim 1 which further comprises a bactericide.

20 13. The composition of claim 12 in which the bactericide comprises zinc borate.

25 14. The composition of claim 1 which further comprises a fungicide.

15. The composition of claim 2 in which the carrier is capable of air drying.

16. The composition of claim 15 in which the buffer is in liquid form and the carrier comprises an aqueous polymer selected from the group consisting of water-reducible alkyds, modified alkyds, acrylic latexes, acrylic epoxy hybrids, water-reducible epoxies, polyurethane dispersions, vinyls and ethylene vinyl acetates.

17. The composition of claim 3 in which the gel has thixotropic properties.

18. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier material further contains metal particles themselves covered with said buffer material and a metal chloride.

19. The composition of claim 18 in which the metal chloride is zinc chloride.

20. The composition of claim 1 in which the carrier material further contains buffer particles themselves covered with said buffer material and a metal chloride.

21. The composition of claim 20 in which the metal chloride is zinc chloride.

22. A method of inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises covering the metal with a composition comprising a carrier material adapted to

cover the metal and containing a buffer material capable of buffering the composition to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.

5 23. A method of inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises coating the metal with at least one layer of a fluid carrier which cures to form a solid layer and which contains a buffer material buffering the coating to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.

10

 24. The method of claim 23 in which the fluid carrier further contains a bactericide.

15

 25. The method of claim 23 in which the fluid carrier further contains a fungicide.

20

 26. The method of claim 23 which further comprises coating the metal with at least one layer containing a water repellant.

25

 27. The method of claim 23 wherein prior to said coating the metal, said metal is plated with a metal selected from the group consisting of zinc, zinc alloy, zinc alloy containing chromate, and zinc alloy containing a chromate conversion film.

30

 28. The method of claim 23 wherein prior to said coating the metal, said metal is covered with a compound selected from the group consisting of zinc phosphate, iron phosphate and manganese phosphate.

29. A method of inhibiting the corrosion of a cable containing multiple metal wires which comprises covering the wires with a gel containing a buffer material buffering the gel to a pH at which the metal wires have a natural passivity to corrosion.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the step of covering the wires includes injecting the gel into the cable.

31. The method of claim 30 in which the gel is thixotropic.

32. The method of claim 30 wherein the gel comprises a pressure tolerance polymer.

33. The method of claim 30 wherein the gel comprises a polymer selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polyester, nylon and tetrafluoroethylene fluorocarbon.

34. A method of making a corrosion inhibitor for a metal surface which comprises dispersing a buffer material into a carrier fluid capable of being applied to the metal to form a permanent covering, and wherein the buffer material buffers the covering to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.

35. The method of claim 34 wherein the amount of buffer material dispersed in the carrier fluid approaches a maximum consistent with uniformity of

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the dispersion in the carrier fluid and with application of the carrier fluid containing the buffer to the metal.

5 36. The method of claim 34 in which the carrier fluid comprises a synthetic polymer and the buffer material comprises sodium or potassium silicate.

10 37. The method of claim 34 in which the carrier fluid comprises a thixotropic gel.

15 38. The method of claim 34 in which the carrier fluid comprises an adhesive.

20 39. A method of inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises coating the metal with a carrier containing particles of pH buffer of varying size which become active as buffers in the presence of moisture over a period of time and buffer the coating to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.

25 40. The method of claim 39 wherein said buffer is comprised of sodium silicate or potassium silicate.

30 41. The method of claim 39 wherein said buffer particles are dissolved in aqueous liquid prior to inclusion in the carrier.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein said carrier is comprised of a polymer selected from the group consisting of water-reducible alkyds, modified alkyds, acrylic latexes, acrylic epoxy hybrids, water-reducible epoxies, polyurethane dispersions, vinyls and ethylene vinyl acetates.

5

43. The method of claim 39 wherein multiple layers of said carrier coating are applied to the metal.

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44. The method of claim 39 further comprising applying a barrier material over the buffer coating on the metal, wherein said barrier material is adapted to protect the buffer coating.

15

45. The method of claim 39 further comprising applying a sealant over the barrier material.

20

46. A composition for inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises a carrier material containing particles of a buffer of varying size to provide time-release buffering to a pH at which the metal has a natural passivity to corrosion.

25

47. The composition of claim 46 wherein said particles are dissolved in liquid prior to inclusion in said carrier.

30

48. The composition of claim 47 wherein said liquid comprises water.

49. A method for inhibiting corrosion of metal comprising:

formulating a coating for said metal comprising a buffer material capable of
buffering the proximity of the metal in a pH range that imparts
5 natural passivity to the metal; and

covering said metal with said coating.

10 50. The method of claim 49, wherein said buffer material is comprised
of buffer particles of varying size such that a time release effect is obtained in
activation of the buffer.

15 51. The method of claim 49 wherein metal fibers used in friction
materials comprise said metal and said coating is applied to the metal fibers by a
spray dry technique, followed by covering said coating with a metal chloride.

20 52. The method of claim 51 wherein said friction material comprises a
phenolic resin.

25 53. The method of claim 51 wherein said metal chloride is zinc chloride
which results in a zinc silicate film surrounding the coated metal when the buffer
material comprises silicate.

30 54. The method of claim 49, wherein said buffer material is comprised
of buffer particles coated with said buffer material by a spray dry technique,
followed by a coating of metal chloride.

- 50 -

55. The method of claim 49 wherein metal fibers used in friction materials comprise said metal and said coating is applied to the metal by mixing particles of the buffer material with the metal fibers in a dry mixture prior to
5 incorporation of the metal fibers into the friction material.

56. The method of claim 55 wherein said particles of buffer material are coated with the buffer material and a film that is partially insoluble in water.
10

57. The method of claim 55 wherein said friction material is comprised of a phenolic thermoset resin.
15

58. A macro-infiltrated, micro-laminated coating system for inhibiting corrosion of metal wherein said system comprises in the proximity of said metal at least one coating layer macro-infiltrated with solid, particulate, buffer material that dissolves upon contact with moisture to buffer the proximity of the metal in a pH
20 range in which the metal is naturally resistant to corrosion and said dissolution is dependent on the concentration gradient of the buffer material between the interior of the coating adjacent the metal and the area surrounding the coating.

59. A cable containing a plurality of metal strands and a rust inhibitor in the interstices between the strands and covering the strands, said rust inhibitor comprising a thixotropic gel containing particles of a buffer material buffering the gel to a pH at which the metal strands have a natural passivity to corrosion.
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60. A method of treating small steel elements such as steel particles and fibers for use in brake friction members which comprise:

5 spraying a stream of an aqueous dispersion of a buffer material into a zone
 to form a mist of the buffer material in the zone;

 maintaining the zone at a temperature sufficient to vaporize water from the
 buffer material;

10 passing a stream of gas containing said particles or fibers into the zone to
 deposit buffer material on the particles or fibers;

 venting said gas and said vaporized water from the zone;

15 recovering said steel elements with deposited buffer material from the zone;
 and

 further covering said steel elements with a partially water-insoluble film
 comprised of metal chloride or metal silicate.

20

61. The method of claim 60 wherein the buffer material is capable in the presence of moisture to provide a pH at which the steel elements are naturally passive to corrosion.

25

62. Steel elements such as powders or fibers coated with a buffer material capable in the presence of moisture to provide a pH at which the steel elements are naturally passive to corrosion.

30

63. A friction braking member comprising a thermosetting resin containing steel elements such as powders or fibers coated with a buffer material capable in the presence of moisture to provide a pH at which the steel elements are naturally passive to corrosion.

5

64. The member of claim 63 which further comprises particles of a buffer material capable in the presence of moisture to provide a pH at which the steel elements are naturally passive to corrosion.

10

65. The member of claim 62 or 63 in which said buffer material comprises an alkali metal silicate.

15

66. A method of treating small steel elements such as particles and fiber for use in friction brake members which comprises:

20

(a) passing a stream of gas up through a bed of said steel elements under conditions to elevate such steel elements into a contact zone above the bed;

25

(b) spraying a stream of an aqueous dispersion of a buffer material into the contact zone in intimate contact with said elevated steel elements so as to deposit said buffer material on said steel elements;

30

(c) maintaining the temperature of the contact zone at a level sufficient to vaporize water from the buffer material;

(d) venting said gas and water vapor from the zone;

- (e) recovering said steel elements with deposited buffer material from said zone; and
- (f) covering said steel elements with a partially water insoluble film.

5

67. A method of treating small steel elements for use in friction brake materials which comprises:

10

contacting said steel elements with a vaporized aqueous dispersion of a buffer material at a temperature sufficient to vaporize water from said buffer material and deposit said buffer material on said steel elements;

15

venting said vaporized water from said zone;

recovering said elements with deposited buffer material from said zone, said buffer material being selected to provide in the presence of moisture a pH at which said steel elements are naturally passive to corrosion; and

20

covering said elements with a partially water insoluble film comprising zinc.

25

68. A method of inhibiting corrosion of steel members used to reinforce concrete which comprises coating the steel members with at least one layer of a fluid which is curable to form a solid layer, said fluid containing a buffer which in the presence of moisture dissolves to provide a pH at which the steel has a natural passivity to corrosion.

30

69. A method of rehabilitating steel members used to reinforce concrete after said members have begun to corrode, said method which comprises pumping into cracks in said concrete a thixotropic composition containing a buffer which in the presence of moisture dissolves to provide a pH at which the steel has a natural passivity to corrosion.
- 5

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 C09D5/08

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 C09D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US,A,4 595 425 (HARDING, R.) 17 June 1986 see claims 1,6,10	1,2,5,6
A	GB,A,2 099 416 (STANDARD TELEPHONES AND CABLES) 8 December 1982 see claims 1-3,12,13	1,2,5-7
A	FR,A,2 655 060 (ALLSTARS) 31 May 1991 see claims 1,4,6,7	1,2,5,6, 9,10

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

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Name and mailing address of the ISA

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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US-A-4595425	17-06-86	AU-B- 591898	21-12-89
		AU-B- 5665186	23-10-86
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		US-A- 4428774	31-01-84

FR-A-2655060	31-05-91	NONE	

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(21) International Application Number: PCT/US95/13441 (22) International Filing Date: 19 October 1995 (19.10.95) (30) Priority Data: 08/327,438 21 October 1994 (21.10.94) US 08/476,271 7 June 1995 (07.06.95) US (71) Applicant: ELISHA TECHNOLOGIES CO. L.L.C. [US/US]; 200 U.S. Highway 63 South, Moberly, MO 65270 (US). (72) Inventors: HEIMANN, Robert, L.; 301 Circle Drive, Moberly, MO 65270 (US). DALTON, William, M.; 527 West Carpenter Street, Moberly, MO 65270 (US). WEBB, David, R.; 36409 Lace Avenue, Macon, MO 63552 (US). (74) Agent: TRIPP, Karen; Arnold, White & Durkee, P.O. Box 4433, Houston, TX 77210 (US).		(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, HU, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LK, LR, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, TJ, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG), ARIPO patent (KE, MW, SD, SZ, UG). Published <i>With international search report.</i> <i>With amended claims.</i> Date of publication of the amended claims: 4 July 1996 (04.07.1996)
(54) Title: CORROSION PREVENTING BUFFER SYSTEM FOR METAL PRODUCTS (57) Abstract <p>A system is disclosed for inhibiting the corrosion of ferrous and other metals by passivating the metals. The system includes novel buffered compositions which may be applied to metal products for preventing or retarding corrosion and methods for applying the buffered compositions to metal products such that corrosion protection of the products is achieved through passivation. The methods include an in-situ application to existing structures with metal reinforcement as well as applications to metal products during manufacture. Generally, the compositions may be in various forms and comprise a carrier component and one or more pH buffer components. The buffer is selected to retain the proximity of the metal at a pH at which the metal is passive to corrosion. The compositions are environmentally friendly and are capable of replacing chromates which have been traditionally used with zinc and zinc alloys to inhibit corrosion of metals but which are potentially harmful to the environment.</p>		

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AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 21 May 1996 (21.05.96);
new claims 70-83 added; remaining claims unchanged (2 pages)]

5 69. A method of rehabilitating steel members used to reinforce concrete after said members have begun to corrode, said method which comprises pumping into cracks in said concrete a thixotropic composition containing a buffer which in the presence of moisture dissolves to provide a pH at which the steel has a natural passivity to corrosion.

10 70. A composition for inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises a carrier material adapted to cover a metal surface to be protected and containing a buffer material capable of buffering the metal surface to a pH at which the metal surface has a passivity to corrosion, said buffer material containing at least one anion selected from the group of anions consisting of silicate ions and borate ions and at least one cation selected from the group of cations consisting of monovalent metal ions and divalent metal ions.

15 71. The composition of Claim 70 in which the monovalent metal ions are selected from the group consisting of potassium ions and sodium ions.

72. The composition of Claim 70 in which the divalent metal ions are selected from the group consisting of calcium ions and zinc ions.

73. The composition of Claim 70 in which the anions are silicate ions.

74. The composition of Claim 73 in which the divalent metal ions are calcium ions.

20 75. The composition of Claim 1 in which the carrier material comprises a polymer.

76. The composition of Claim 75 in which the monovalent metal ions are selected from the group consisting of potassium ions and sodium ions.

77. The composition of Claim 75 in which the divalent metal ions are selected from the group consisting of calcium ions and zinc ions.

78. The composition of Claim 77 in which the anions are silicate ions.

79. The composition of Claim 78 in which the divalent metal ions are calcium ions.

80. A composition for inhibiting the corrosion of a metal which comprises a polymer carrier material adapted to cover a metal surface to be protected and containing a buffer material capable of buffering the metal surface to a pH at which the metal surface has a passivity to corrosion, said buffer material containing silicate ions and at least one divalent cation selected from the group consisting of calcium and zinc ions.

81. The composition of Claim 80 in which the carrier comprises a g l.

82. The composition of Claim 81 in which the carrier is a synthetic oil that is a polyalphaolefin base oil.

83. The composition of Claim 80 in which the carrier also contains a bactericide.